



protozoa

representative specimens

Kingdom: Protista
Division/Phylum: Protozoa

Features

Protozoa are microscopic, single-celled, animal-like protists. Some have shells. Many different organisms are found in the Division Protozoa including common organisms like Paramecium spp. and Amoeba spp. Protozoa exhibit a variety of shapes and sizes.

Natural History

Protozoa live anywhere water or moist soil are present. They may be found in an animal's body. Protozoa can form their body into a hard-walled cyst when conditions are bad. The cyst may be carried by the wind or mobile animals from one location to another. Some protozoa are parasites (take food and shelter from a host organism, giving nothing back in return) while others are free-living predators. Some are symbiotic (live in close association with an organism of a different species). For instance, one species lives in the intestine of termites, digesting the food for the termite and receiving a food supply and protection in return.

Habitats

Mississippi River; Missouri River; interior rivers and streams; constructed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs; natural lakes and prairie marshes; wet prairies and fens; bottomland forests

Iowa Status

common, native

Iowa Range

statewide

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.